

CLAIMS

1. A system for maintaining an inflatable cushion in a folded condition, comprising:

an inflatable chamber;

5 a tab having a head and a narrow neck, the tab being attached to the chamber; and

a supporting member having an aperture sized to receive and interlock with the tab, the aperture having a width less than a width of the head of the tab, wherein the supporting member applies an inward compressive force to the chamber to retain the chamber in a folded condition when the tab interlocks with the aperture.

10 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the supporting member is integrally formed with the chamber.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the supporting member surrounds the chamber.

15 4. The system of claim 1, wherein the supporting member is an elongated strip.

5. The system of claim 1, further comprising a second tab attached to the chamber and a second supporting member having an aperture that is sized to receive and interlock with the second tab, wherein the second supporting member applies an inward compressive force to the chamber to retain the chamber in a folded condition when the second tab interlocks with the aperture of the second supporting member.

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6. The system of claim 1, further comprising a tear seam in the supporting member to permit deployment of the chamber.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the supporting member is made from a flexible material.

5 8. The system of claim 7, wherein the supporting member is made from fabric.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the tab has an opening that permits attachment of the chamber to a vehicle.

10 10. The system of claim 1, wherein the tab, chamber, and supporting member are integrally formed.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the tab is made from a substantially rigid material.

12. A system for maintaining an inflatable curtain in a folded condition, comprising:

15 an inflatable chamber;

a tab having a head and a narrow neck, the tab being attached to the chamber; and

a supporting member attached to the chamber, the supporting member having an aperture sized to receive and interlock with the tab, the aperture having a width less than a width of the head of the tab, wherein the supporting member applies an inward compressive force to the chamber to retain the chamber in a folded condition when the tab interlocks with the aperture.

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13. The system of claim 12, further comprising a tear seam in the supporting member to permit deployment of the chamber.

14. The system of claim 12, further comprising a second tab attached to the chamber and a second supporting member having an aperture that is sized to receive and interlock with the second tab, wherein the second supporting member applies an inward compressive force to the chamber to retain the chamber in a folded condition when the second tab interlocks with the aperture of the second supporting member.

15. The system of claim 12, wherein the supporting member is made from a flexible material.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the supporting member is made from fabric.

17. The system of claim 12, wherein the tab has an opening that permits attachment of the chamber to a vehicle.

18. The system of claim 12, wherein the tab, chamber, and supporting member are integrally formed.

19. The system of claim 12, wherein the supporting member is integrally formed with the chamber.

20. The system of claim 12, wherein the tab is made from a substantially rigid material.

21. A system for maintaining an inflatable curtain in a folded condition,
comprising:

an inflatable curtain;

a tab having a head and a narrow neck, the tab being attached to the curtain; and

5 a supporting member having a first and a second aperture and an intermediary
region disposed between the first and second apertures, each aperture being sized to
receive and interlock with the tab and having a width less than a width of the head of the
tab, the intermediary region being sized to surround and retain the curtain in a folded
condition when the first and second apertures interlock with the tab.

10 22. The system of claim 21, wherein the supporting member is an elongated
strip.

23. The system of claim 21, further comprising a tear seam in the supporting
member to permit deployment of the curtain.

15 24. The system of claim 21, further comprising a second tab attached to the
curtain and a second supporting member having a first and a second aperture and an
intermediary region disposed between the first and second apertures of the second
supporting member, wherein the intermediary region of the second supporting member is
sized to surround and retain the curtain in a folded condition when the first and second
apertures of the second supporting member interlock with the second tab.

20 25. The system of claim 21, wherein the supporting member is made from a
flexible material.

26. The system of claim 21, wherein the tab has an opening that permits attachment of the curtain to a vehicle.

27. The system of claim 21, wherein the tab is made from a substantially rigid material.

5 28. A system for maintaining an inflatable cushion in a folded condition, comprising:

inflatable chamber means for receiving inflation gas;

supporting means for retaining the inflatable chamber in a folded condition, the supporting means having an aperture;

10 tab means for interlocking with the aperture, the tab means having a head and a narrow neck and being attached to the chamber means, the tab means being sized to interlock with the aperture, the aperture having a width less than a width of the head of the tab means, wherein the supporting means applies an inward compressive force to the chamber means when the tab means interlocks with the aperture.

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